



**The Gifts of Spring!!??** Along with the time change and warmer temperatures, Governor Hogan has given the gift of less COVID restrictions! The capacity limitations on restaurants, bars retail businesses, religious facilities, fitness centers, personal services and indoor recreational establishments have all been lifted. Vaccination efforts are ramping up and we are all looking forward to the end of restrictions and resuming our “normal” lives. Please be patient and wear those masks a little longer, if not for yourself, for the sake of someone you love. We will celebrate together once again soon!

Here's a reminder of some items I was pleased to bring forward to serve: enacted reserved street parking to encourage street pick-ups, our only option and for a long time. Some still feel this is a safer option. These spaces will be reserved as a “Mayor’s Emergency” for a while longer. After that, businesses having a continued need will have to apply through our Planning Process. Advertising for businesses fliers, flags etc. that detract from a town, but serve a business will be retracted back to just restaurants that still have limitations. After giving them time to balance, the normal requirements will return. Music on Main Street daily will not stop! A great lesson learned. The Main Street Anthem on Friday at Noon will not stop! Another lesson learned. Pop up parks we will stretch longer again for the safety of all and to help businesses. Plus, outside dining is amazing and should be everywhere but within approx. 6 months, business will need to apply. By record here I'm asking our Planning Dept. to review items to ease and encourage this process. Let's lighten up to ensure more occur!

The Bank!!! The unbelievable plus to this Covid that thanks to mostly volunteers and volunteer contractors, a few staff helped nailed and my personal volunteers Jim Stargel, Katie Giganti, Tina Swanson, and Beverly Blatchford, Volunteer of the Year, this place became the largest, most beautiful perhaps, and only large park we have on Main Street. This asset became a wonderful opportunity to honor long-time residents Helen Simpson, Oscar Baker, and Pete Bowlus, of whom the park was named after.

The fire pit and extra water fountains will now be up together ‘til late next fall or worst case, they sell it! Which we all want!!!!

Councilmember Pamela Reed will be launching even more and larger amazing town events here! The beauty is its shaded in the afternoon!

As the parks were allowed to open partial with limits, fitness businesses that reached out such as bootcamps, yoga classes, other exercise groups and Martial Art's with no other safe options were allowed to use our spaces. Other Mayors were cautious but some later followed us, actually on several levels! Those Municipalities may keep stricter requirements than the Governors. I will proactively evaluate and decide what is best for our businesses and community. Mount Airy will lead the way, not follow the pack! And at this point we are following the Governor 100%.



To connect with students potentially feeling socially isolated, I launched the “Mayor’s Reading Series” with my pal Meatball.

The Messenger! Our local paper and the major source of local business advertising and local coverage. No one else would cover in that detail. Working together as I noted we didn't fund but improved our own reach and helped the community by utilizing more. Without our help, I am told that the paper faced certain shut down.

Well so much I'm sure I missed something magically we are doing! But it will come forward.

We may able to bring our emergency Covid 19 team for a closure but I want to note everyone, on every level of team. They helped make decisions that kept Mt Airy safe.

I respect Your challenges.

**Watkins Park Inclusive Playground** – I am so proud to announce that you will be seeing a new inclusive playground at Watkins Park and pre-construction is already underway! Thanks goes to many starting with the Recreation and Parks Board and the Town Council for approving the budget to fund the project. Without the help of staff, we would not have received the over \$200,000 in funding through the Community Parks and Playground grant. A huge shout out to Councilmember Pamela Reed and Ava’s T21 Foundation whose staggering fund-raising efforts despite a pandemic were able to raise the \$75,000 in remaining funds needed. Thank you to those who contributed to this valuable asset to our community. Ribbon cutting ceremony coming soon! Be sure to check the Town’s Facebook page for updates on the project!

**Elections** – The Town will be having an election this year with both the mayoral and two town council positions up for re-election. I will be running once again for mayor with a friend and great community servant, Council President Larry Hushour. No matter the outcome, I have been honored to serve you, the citizens of Mount Airy, for my terms as mayor. I hope that you will all come out either in-person (with safety precautions in place) on May 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Mount Airy Reception Hall, or cast your vote via absentee ballot. Contact Colleen Reilly at [creilly@mountairymd.gov](mailto:creilly@mountairymd.gov) to request your absentee ballot. For more information, visit [www.mountairymd.gov/elections](http://www.mountairymd.gov/elections).

**Budget Preparation** - The town is moving into our annual budget preparation cycle. Budget workshops and meeting dates will soon be announced. The public is welcome and encouraged to attend. Thanks to past leadership, the Town of Mount Airy continues to remain fiscally solvent.

**MD Income Tax Form 502** – don’t forget to enter the Town of Mount Airy in the Maryland Political Subdivision Code Field on form 502! This ensures that Mount Airy gets the maximum



tax allocation. If you live in the town on the Carroll County side, enter 0703. For Frederick County, enter 1114.

### **What's Happening in your town!**

**Main Street's Lucky Golden Ticket Chocolate Crawl** – Saturday, March 20<sup>th</sup> from 12:00 – 4:00 PM. This year's event will feature LIVE music, downtown shopping and of course CHOCOLATE! Bring your sweetheart and enjoy and evening out! Tickets are \$2 to enter the Lucky Golden Ticket contest to win a 5lb. chocolate bar and \$100. Smaller prizes available too! [Tickets available at www.mountairymainstreet.org](http://www.mountairymainstreet.org).

**Support Mount Airy Restaurant Week** – Engage your appetites and prepare to enjoy Restaurant Week April 19-25<sup>th</sup>! Our Mount Airy restaurants will be showing off their best and great prices AND there's a chance to win \$500! Find out more at [www.mountairymd.gov/restaurantweek](http://www.mountairymd.gov/restaurantweek)

**Hometown Heroes** – Thanks to the time-consuming efforts of the banner team leadership of Melissa Thorn and Patty Washabaugh and the help of their team, we have successfully completed the second round of applications. The team will be reevaluating and possibly setting up another cycle in the near future. Details will be posted!! Banners will be going up for Memorial Day!

**Storm Water Management** – If you have noticed construction behind the American Legion, it is the construction of the East West Park Stormwater Management Pond. Construction is expected to be completed by December 2021. The Twin Ridge SWM pond will be completed in April.

**"If I Were Mayor" essay contest for all 4<sup>th</sup> graders.** Due to COVID-19, the "If I Were Mayor Contest" had to be a little different this year and I greatly missed visiting with the 4<sup>th</sup> graders at Mount Airy and Twin Ridge Elementary Schools. Thanks again to Town Staff for offering an alternative way for me to be with you. All information about the contest can be found at [www.mountairymd.gov/iwm](http://www.mountairymd.gov/iwm). Entries due March 31st.

**Volunteer Opportunities:** Please visit <http://www.mountairymd.org/> for a list of volunteer opportunities on one of our many commissions. There are residency requirements on most commissions. Please let me know if anyone is interested in serving on a commission where there is a vacancy. You can call Town Hall at 301-829-1424 or email me directly at [prockinberg@gmail.com](mailto:prockinberg@gmail.com).

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Patrick Rockinberg  
Mayor